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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (29 Nov 72) DAFD-OTT

15 December 1972

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: LTC Gerald R. Bartlett, Province
Senior Advisor, Hau Nghia Province, 19 May 71 - 14 Nov 72 (U)

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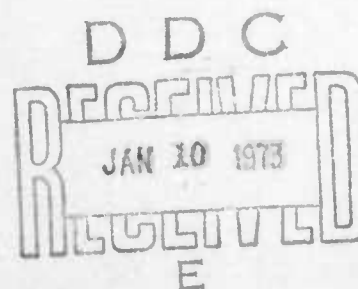
1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U), 2 July 1971.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of LTC Gerald R. Bartlett, subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 525-14; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
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SECTION I

NAME: GERALD T. BARTLETT

GRADE: Lieutenant Colonel

SSAN: 549-40-1608

BRANCH OF SERVICE: U. S. Army/ Armor

PROVINCE: Hau Nghia, TRAC

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: 19 May 1971 - 14 November 1972

EXPECTED REASSIGNMENT DATE: 14 November 1972

PREVIOUS TOUR IN VIETNAM: 15 June 1966 - 14 June 1967

ASSIGNMENT ON PREVIOUS VIETNAM TOUR:

HOP TAC SECRETARIAT

REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

CLASSIFIED BY: Lieutenant Colonel Gerald T. Bartlett
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
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4

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SECTION II

1. (U) What background did you have for your position? In preparation for my previous tour I attended the Civil Affairs School and the Defense Language Institute. During my tour with the HOP TAC Secretariat I was civil affairs advisor, PSYOPS advisor and operations advisor. My duties required a detailed knowledge of AB 145 and the 1966 and 1967 CDLD Plan. I made frequent trips to all provinces and districts in what was then the only national priority area. I was required to brief General Westmoreland weekly on the status of pacification and development in that area. At RDSO I was the Operations Field Liaison Officer for III Corps/MR3. My job was to evaluate ARVN military support for pacification. As a result, I accompanied all ARVN maneuver battalions, so tasked, on pacification operations and debriefed, on-site, all DSA's in MR3. When I volunteered for the PSA assignment I already had experience in all facets of pacification and development. I also had very strong concepts about how to advise and what needed to be done. I knew exactly what I was getting into. In hindsight I believe my initial assessment was correct.

2. (U) What training did you have for this position? Attendance at the Foreign Service Institute in 1970-71. Attendance at the U. S. Army Civil Affairs School in 1966. I was author for the subject "Leadership at Senior Advisory Levels" at the Command and General Staff College. I attended the Australian Staff College where considerable emphasis was given to counter-insurgency operations.

3. (U) What additional training would you suggest for your position? I believe the training conducted by VTC of the FSI was adequate. Training is not particularly important. It is very important that the person comes into the program because he wants to be an advisor. If he has the desire and has shown from past performance that he is a front runner, then the job will pose no difficulties.

4. (U) What should be the length of tour for your position? Eighteen months is adequate. I think the PSA should be replaced at that time. One cannot help but narrow the scope of his advisory effort over the period of the tour. Fresh ideas may achieve success in areas where the previous PSA has turned away.

5. (U) Was support from Region and/or Saigon Headquarters satisfactory? If not, specify deficiencies.

a. Support in the form of guidance, understanding and within capabilities, material and personnel rendered this team has been excellent. I have never been more willingly and effectively served by a higher headquarters than I have by Region.

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b. Several problems have been encountered in logistics support. These problems stem from the consolidation of the team from a separate MACV compound to the present CORDS compound. The problem is that each agency has separate responsibilities and each is governed by separate regulations and funding. For example, our GSO generator is inadequate. Because GSO is providing sufficient power to support their responsibilities they will not provide additional power to support such things as a TOC and the MACV office. PA&E will not provide a generator because it would be located in a GSO compound and would provide power to buildings not contained in their contract. GSO is not responsible. PA&E is responsible but cannot place the generator in the GSO compound and there is no other suitable location to place the generator and still keep it under continuous U. S. supervision. In the meantime we have closed the CORDS office and are running the GSO generators in series so that there is sufficient power for the compound and TOC. Generally, there is no sense of urgency among support personnel nor real understanding of the ramifications of a generator breaking down. I feel HQs MACV has been negligent in not negotiating a new agreement between all support agencies to cover the problems created by the consolidation of advisory compounds.

c. The logistic support for military advisory vehicles is inadequate. The basic problem is the system itself. Advisors should never have been satellite onto the Vietnamese system. To do so only magnifies an already grave problem. A regional repair shop and contact teams would be a better solution. I realize it is a little late in the game for the type of changes I'm suggesting. I offer them only as lessons learned and hopefully they will be considered in any similar venture in the future.

6. (U) Were there any programs delayed because support was not forthcoming? Were there any programs that were especially successful because support was readily available? Which one?

a. There were no programs delayed because of a lack of U. S. support.

b. Several programs were successful because of support from Region; in particular, the speedy resettlement of war victims resulted from the buildings we were able to obtain from Long Binh. Phung Hoang would have died on the vine had not the DEPCORDS, TRAC taken positive, successful action to get the Commander of Police fired.

7. (U) Do the reporting requirements as set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 provide a means for reporting all information of present and future value? If not, what change would you recommend? The reports provide sufficient information to permit higher headquarters to make evaluations. However, after evaluations are made, particularly if they appear to show regression, they should be checked out by paying a staff visit to the PSA. For example, I've heard all sorts of reasons why Phung Hoang is not successful in Hau Nghia. None of these assessments were accurate. Statistics may indicate there is a problem, seldom do they identify the nature of the problem.

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8. (U) Do the MACCORDS Management Information System Field Reporting requirements set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 adequately measure progress in pacification programs? I believe they measure progress or regression fairly adequately. Seldom do they provide a complete picture because they do not measure intangibles such as leadership and morale.

9. (U) Were instructions from higher headquarters clear with no conflicting requirement? If not, what specific instances occurred where conflicting instructions were received? I have had no difficulty understanding written instructions and I can recall no conflicting requirements.

ANSWER QUESTIONS 10-15 BY GIVING AN ORDER OF PRIORITY

10. (C) The most clearly defined and directed programs are:

- a. Village Self-Development Program
- b. Rural Credit
- c. LTTT
- d. Local Administration

NOTE: This answer concerns the understanding of what is supposed to be done, not the degree of success or effectiveness.

11. (C) The most effective para-military forces are:

- a. PHU
- b. RD Cadre
- c. NPFF
- d. PSDF

12. (C) The most successful pacification programs are:

- a. Effectiveness of Regional Forces
- b. LTTT
- c. VSD
- d. Rural Credit
- e. Agriculture

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13. (C) The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort are:

- a. Phung Hoang
- b. Population Security
- c. RD Cadre Activities
- d. LTTT
- e. VSD

14. (C) The least successful pacification programs are:

- a. National Police Security Operations
- b. PSDF
- c. Phung Hoang
- d. Manpower Development
- e. People's Organizations
- f. Peoples' Information

15. (C) The programs that have the least impact upon the pacification effort are:

- a. Administrative Security
- b. Peoples' Organizations
- c. PSDF
- d. Manpower Development

16. (C) The rural people (are) (are not) aware of the pacification efforts the GVN and U. S. are making. If not, how can they be informed?

Although the people are aware of pacification programs, there is often misunderstanding of principal aspects of programs. The VIS Cadre at village (hamlet cadre already eliminated) are ineffective. The best means of informing the people is for officials at Province and District to talk to the village leaders. Well conducted PMAT's are very useful.

17. (C) The people, as you know them, are (more) (less) committed to the GVN than when you assumed your job? Why? Because security has improved and more government services are reaching the people. The people understand that they get more benefits from the government. I believe evidence

8

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of this is that the people invariably head toward GVN controlled areas when fighting takes place in the hamlets. However, where the population is close to base areas or where they have viable VCI in their midst, this loyalty to the government is much weaker.

18. (C) Do you feel that the pacification plan is sufficiently detailed to provide guidance and set goals that will result in security and growth of Vietnam (yes) (no). If no, what change in the plan should be made?

The goals and objectives of the plan are good and help orient local officials. I think that the plan includes too much detailed methodology. As a result, local officials and inspectors become more concerned about compliance with method than achievement of goals. I believe the government structure at province is competent enough that the central government could develop a plan that only stated goals and the resources allotted to the province. Upon receipt, the province would develop a plan to achieve the goals within the resources allotted and include enough of the method to enable higher headquarters to evaluate the feasibility of the provincial plan.

19. (C) Do you feel that the pacification plan was adequately communicated and explained to you and your counterpart (yes) (no). If no, how can this be accomplished? The plan was well explained. Earlier (than the 1972 plan) final approval by the President is essential because the Vietnamese will delay implementation until they are absolutely certain that further changes will not be made.

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SECTION III

FUNCTIONAL AREAS

On the following pages give a history of the successes and failures and background of functional areas that have transpired during your tour as a province advisor. Give your comments on what changes should be made to improve each program in the future. Recommendations for additional subjects for discussion during the debriefing interview should be included in -- "Other Areas".

TERRITORIAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

RF/PF: When I arrived there was 1 RF battalion, 7 Lien Doi and 1 provincial reconnaissance company for a total of 33 RF companies. There were 77 PF platoons. Presently, there are 3 RF battalions, 5 Lien Doi and the provincial reconnaissance company - - still 33 RF companies. There are 117 PF platoons. In May 1971 only the RF battalion commanded its companies. The Lien Doi headquarters were garbage dumps for incompetent officers. During operations, the Province Chief directly controlled all (each) of the RF companies, regardless of the number involved. At that time I had 14 MATs. They were working with all of the RF companies and PF platoons, endeavoring to improve their night ambush techniques. They had gone about as far as they could go. The units with good commanders had improved. The units with bad commanders were no better than when the MATs had begun operations. Deduction: RF effectiveness is not primarily a function of training. Training is needed by all, but is a waste of time in the absence of a good commander. I was concerned about two things: Firstly, I felt the productivity of the MATs was not high enough in relation to the risk involved; secondly, I worried that RF performance was directly related to the Province Chief's presence. A chain of command was not in effect to the RF companies. If we had a reduction in C&C helicopter time there would be a parallel reduction in RF effectiveness. For those two reasons, I drafted a letter to the Province Chief and listed what I felt were appropriate functions and responsibilities of battalion and group commanders. I told him that I intended to withdraw the MATs, however, if he was willing to issue and enforce an order implementing my recommendations, then I would retain 8 MATs to work with those headquarters. He agreed. (My recommendations were presented in a letter to LTC Thanh, dated 22 June 1971. A copy was forwarded to CORDS, MR3 and CORDS, MACV). The gist of my recommendation was for the battalion/group commanders to assume full responsibility for security in an assigned AO. They were to plan their own operations and were assigned training, administrative and logistic responsibilities for their units. I instructed the MATs that their sole mission was to do everything possible to get their counterparts to recognize and accept the assigned responsibilities. I gave them no training or tactical requirements, leaving that to their discretion. I required them to submit to me twice each month a report which indicated the extent the commanders implemented or were allowed to implement Colonel Thanh's order. These reports were translated and presented

10

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to the Province Chief. His response was excellent. He fired and repeatedly fired successive commanders until he eventually ended up with his eight "fightingest" officers in command. From that point until now RF performance improved and is continuing to improve. That is why the RF in Hau Nghia are better than the RF in most other places. That is why General Minh has stated in public that Hau Nghia has "the best RF in the world, better than ARVN". That is why, when in contact, leadership casualties are so high in our RF - - two group commanders, 1 group XO and 14 RF company commanders from 11 May - 14 June 1972, and 1 group commander and 2 company commanders from 12-18 October 1972. In May 1971 there was only 1 RF company that could be considered mobile. Most of the other RF companies were occupying one or more OBs in or very near the populated areas. Every night, it was necessary to return the units to those OBs. Therefore, Colonel Thanh and I, through our own respective channels, requested an allocation to recruit 35 additional PF platoons. This authority was granted and the last of the new platoons was recruited and came out of training on 26 March 1972. This enabled the Province Chief to move his RF away from the population by building them new OBs in remote areas. At that time we had 17 companies in a completely mobile role and they remained so until the beginning of the Nguyen Hue offensive.

Deduction: One cannot place RF in a mobile role unless there are sufficient PF to assure security for the population. I believe that no province should be authorized additional RF until all of those currently authorized are operating away from and without ties to, the populated areas. One must be careful then in establishing programs that reduce the number of PF. If, in establishing a STCP or converting Lien Doi to battalions it requires the deactivation of PF to obtain space authorizations, it should be done with the full knowledge that RF will be taken out of a mobile role and tasked to replace the lost PF in the village. Given his choice of going after the enemy in a base area or securing the population in their hamlets, the Province Chief will protect the people every time, even if it means breaking his RF companies down into separate platoon OBs. I believe that having the RF conduct mobile operations in the enemy's base areas is vital. I think that CORDS should oppose any scheme or formula, the net result of which will cause RF to be drawn back to the hamlets. I consider the STCP, conversion to battalion, and the HES/TFARES comparison to determine PF deployment to fall into the category of schemes and formulas I just described. In addition to improved command and mobility of the RF, another significant improvement has been in the deployment of artillery. In May 1971, not a single artillery piece had ever been deployed out of its firing position. Each piece was completely walled in by sandbags. As a result, seldom was a contact supported by more than a single platoon. The Vietnamese solution to this lack of volume of fire was to have everybody fire faster. This is one of the basic reasons why the TF artillery fires 6 rounds before, if ever, checking their bubbles. The resulting range errors are the reason why the RF won't call for fires when close-in to the enemy, or assault under the artillery fire. I pleaded with Colonel Thanh to mass his artillery. Finally in November 1971, a captured district MI chief, when asked, told Colonel Thanh that his artillery was rotten because of the weak volume of fire. Since then we habitually move our artillery to support operations and frequently mass 4 to 6 tubes. Although we improved artillery deployment, we failed to

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improve employment. The troops will not use artillery when close-in to the enemy. I consider this to be a genuine training problem which the counter-parts recognize. Unfortunately, artillery ammunition has been in such short supply, a training program just isn't feasible. We have had little success in upgrading the performance of RF. Part of the problem is that the security situation has improved to the extent that they no longer worry about being overrun. Moving the RF away from them definitely adds to their motivation. Basically, it is a leadership problem. We are lucky if we can find 33 good RF commanders. We don't stand a chance, or have the feedback necessary, to identify 117 RF platoon leaders. Two practices have given us temporary improvement in RF performance. The first has been to attach a RF platoon to an RF company for operations. The RF leadership tends to take up the slack. The second practice has been to set up RF companies commanded by an RF officer. This temporary expedient has worked well. Concerning changes to the CDLD Programs, I think the goal for bringing hamlets to HES Category "A" is unrealistic unless goals are established for ARVN to destroy enemy units and base areas in the Clearing Zone. At the very least, during inspections of provincial CDLD programs, senior ARVN officers who have AOs contiguous to the province should be required to be present to explain their actions. For example, when the 101 Regiment attacks the populated areas of Trang Bang, they do it from bases in an ARVN AO and they must pass through that AO to get to the populated area. I have never seen an ARVN commander held responsible for this. Until they are held accountable and do something about that responsibility it is meaningless to harass the Province. ARVN should be held accountable for the actions of main force units and province for the activity of local force, guerillas and VCI. Most hamlets retain low ratings because of "enemy activity" and/or "enemy presence". When that activity or presence is main force stemming from an ARVN AO, then the appropriate ARVN commander should be taken to task. The goals for reducing shelling should be eliminated. There is no way to plan for the defense of such activity, no inspector can offer an acceptable solution, and therefore, the Province Chief ignores the problem. Effective night operations will reduce shellings. Effective night operations with appropriate indicators identified, should be the objective - not reduced shellings. Numerous incidents of shellings only serve as an indicator of poor night operations. A suitable indicator might be "how many VC killed in ambushes between 2400 hours and 0510 hours". When that figure goes up, shellings will go down. The RF redeployment criteria should be issued as guidance, not as a directive. A comparison of HES to TFARES is not a suitable basis for determining troop deployment. Firstly, it assumes that the HES and TFARES are accurate. Secondly, it does not take into consideration the effectiveness of territorial forces, quality of unit leadership, proximity of enemy bases, the enemy's intentions or capability, all of which must be considered in determining troop deployment.

PSDF: PSDF has been a great disappointment to me because I'm not yet convinced we really understand the problems or the upper limits of performance we should be able to expect. I believe we made a big mistake when we took away the PSDF advisor. Not only should we have kept him but added advisors to the district teams. I think guidance on the employment of PSDF is too rigid. In some areas,

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12

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security simply won't permit the performance of security tasks as outlined in the concept. I am of the opinion that perhaps four or five concepts of employment should be developed. These should be related to the actual level of security in the hamlet. Inter-teams should progress through each successively higher level of performance until they are performing as described in the current concept. My letters to the Province Chief, subject: Expansion of Territorial Security in Hau Nghia Province, dated 2 March 1972 and letter, subject: Suggestions to Improve the Security Situation and the Security Forces of Hau Nghia Sector, dated 20 March 1972 (copies of these letters were forwarded to CORDS, TRIC and CORDS, MACV) contain many concepts and recommendations on improving security to include upgrading security forces. Both are completely valid today and would be a good starting point for the new PSA once the current offensive is over. Additionally, I recommend that we eliminate support PSDF entirely. It is wholly ineffective and therefore a waste of executive time and money. Also, weed out incapable individuals from the Hardcore and Combat PSDF. These are mainly the older members. Peasants are worn out at an early age and many have a drinking problem. Only the young with effective leadership will perform effectively. The bulk of the population can belong to other groups and organizations such as the sponsorship groups for military units.

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13.

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PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTORATE

National Police Field Force: Generally ineffective. In fact the only time I have seen them do anything worthwhile was when under the direct, close control of a district chief. Approximately one platoon is designated as a reaction force to the Police Operations Center (POC) at Bao Trai and is used for the apprehension of legal cadre. This platoon has recently shown some signs of developing into an effective force. It is commanded by a PRU of proven leadership ability. The field police commander was recently arrested for corrupt practices. The new commander has been on the job an inadequate time to permit an evaluation.

National Police Operations: Security operations by the national police are almost totally ineffective with the exception of an occasional village police force. I believe this is principally due to the gross and blatant corruption in the organization at every level. Recently, based on an investigation by my POPAT advisor, the DEPCORDS, TRAC, was able to get the Police Commander and the former Commander of Police Special Branch arrested. Several others are under investigation. The corruption covered the entire operation from resources control to releasing VCI for money. The new police commander is very impressive. Several long discussions with him indicate that he fully intends to clean up his organization. Some positive changes are already noticeable. I am not satisfied with the police advisory effort. They do an excellent job in the implementation of management systems, ID card program, detention center management, etc. Altogether, the advisor has about 32 programs to monitor, almost all of which deal with the long range improvement of police organization and administration. I feel that the advisor is so concerned and busy with those programs that there simply is not enough time to get involved with, advise on and follow-up, police operations. I am not criticizing the police advisors - - I think those I've had have been well qualified and dedicated. I think they should have an assistant, an outside man, an operations man. I would recommend that he be a military police officer so that there would be fewer restrictions on what he does and where and when he does it. I think it would enable us to give balanced and needed advice to both police administration and operations.

14

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

Village Self Development: An extremely worthwhile program that has made a distinct contribution to pacification. The Vietnamese have a firm grip on this program. They watch it closely and their PMAT visits are helpful and effective. Our role is purely that of monitoring the program. In Hau Nghia the peoples contribution to the program, both with funds and labor, is very good.

RD Cadre: Probably the most effective and dependable agency of the GVN operating in the province. They are very popular with the people. A major contribution is the work they have done in remote areas in building schools and providing teachers. Although they are not our most prolific intelligence source they are probably the most reliable. The Province Chief uses them extensively for various purposes, such as checking out rumors, and in getting information out to the population quickly. They are a distinct asset in the village in assisting officials and in getting new programs started. I do not think the need for cadre has diminished in any way. Certainly their role changes and should change but they are the only agency of the GVN with the flexibility and broad range of skills to adapt quickly to changing conditions.

Ethnic Minorities: None in province.

Local Government: The effectiveness of local government varies considerably throughout the province but generally, it is more effective now than it was 18 months ago. Colonel Thanh personally got involved in the electoral process by making sure there were competent candidates running for office. His favorites had an unusually high success rate in the elections! Since the implementation of Decree 120 there has been inadequate time to appraise the effectiveness of the appointed officials. The Province Chief was very careful in their selection and it appears that he was as concerned with their potential effectiveness as with their loyalty. There has been no adverse reaction from the populace to the implementation of the decree. It remains to be seen how well the village police chief will be able to function as deputy for security. Frankly, I'm not optimistic. Training of local officials is generally poorly conducted. Usually there are not adequate training facilities. Classrooms are hot and crowded. Emphasis should be on quality, not quantity. It would be better to train five people well and let them return to the village to train five more and continue in that manner until training is completed. Presently, only a numerical goal is being reached. There is little or no education in the provincial classroom.

Aid In Kind: I am sure the APT could be reduced in the near future with no measurable adverse impact. I do feel, however, we have used our total allocation effectively. The bulk of the fund is used to support VIS, POPAT, and the national police. Lately more of the fund has been used to support the youth program; these requests usually come at the initiative of the Province Chief. In most cases, the fund is used as a coverup for our counterparts faulty fiscal planning or unforeseen expenses.

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Refugees: The last refugees in Hau Nghia were the 15,000 from Cambodia who were resettled in Cu Chi in mid-1971. That project was very successful and the settlement is now a village with an elected government. During the Nguyen Hue Offensive we had had to cope with over 30,000 war victims. The response of provincial officials has been outstanding. We were fortunate in being able to obtain several buildings from Long Binh for use in reconstruction of schools, markets, dispensaries, offices and houses.

Social Welfare: The Social Welfare service has performed adequately only because of the urgency of the situation and the emphasis of the Province Chief and his deputy. Left to their own initiative, the Service is found wanting.

Chieu Hoi Directorate: This program should be evaluated to determine if what we gain from the program is worth the risk we take in continuing it. I say this because most of our ralliers are low level with little valuable information. On the other hand it is the easiest way for the enemy to acquire legal status for its cadre. In any event, I think the Chieu Hoi organization should be eliminated as a separate organization and incorporated into the Police Operations Center. Emphasis should be shifted from the number of ralliers to the effectiveness of the exploitation of those intelligence sources and follow-up of their activities once they return to the village.

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16

REPORTS AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

Report Requirements: During the past 18 months, the number of recurring reports has been reduced. The current requirements do not present an undue burden on the advisory team. With the planned and likely further reduction of the teams, there must be a concurrent reduction of all types of reports and studies. Analytical reports, appraisals and evaluations are a problem for the team. Usually they must be done by the PSA or DPSA. This can easily detract from advisory efforts. I realize that these constitute probably the most valuable and sometimes absolutely necessary information given higher headquarters. As long as the criteria is necessity rather than nice-to-have, the team can cope.

Report Feedback: Adequate.

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PHUNG HOANG

Phung Hoang: There is no other program that received as much of my personal attention. I literally hounded my advisors, the Province Chief, MSS, G-2, POC, Chieu Hoi, PSCG, etc. There is no other program which has caused me so much heartbreak. Although we have a high rate of neutralizations and have achieved it through reaction to intelligence, we have had no success with organized, routine, specific targeting. The PLOCC/DIOCC/VIOCC was unworkable. The POC will work if there are some augmentations to the Situation Section and if the gross and blatant police corruption can be halted (we've made great strides in this area). I strongly recommend a shift in emphasis from the apprehension and prosecution of illegal cadre to legal cadre. Goals appropriate to counter-subversive operations against legal agents should be included in the CDLD Plan. Also, I strongly recommend a shift in emphasis from the "dossier" to the "acquisition of intelligence". The dossier is a repository of intelligence collection. Inspect the collection effort with emphasis on the exploitation of human sources. If apprehensions are high and prosecutions low, then it's a good idea to look at the dossiers and also the possibility of offenders buying releases for money. An inspection of dossiers does not identify the problem. I really believe that I know what is needed to conduct an effective anti-subversive program. If my comments have stimulated any interest, I recommend reading the following letters I have written on the subject:

- a. Letter to LTC Doan Cong Hau, subject: Phung Hoang Organization, Training and Advisory Support, dated 19 July 1972.
- b. Letter to LTC Doan Cong Hau, subject: Phung Hoang Functions and Responsibilities, dated 18 August 1972.
- c. Letter to DEPCORDS, TRAC, subject: Weaknesses in Phung Hoang Concepts and Organizations, dated 21 August 1972.
- d. Letter to LTC Doan Cong Hau, subject: Phung Hoang Program, dated 18 September 1972.
- e. Letter to Colonel C. M. Hurtt, Phung Hoang Coordinator, CORDS, TRAC, dated 20 September 1972.
- f. Memorandum for Mr. Walkinshaw, subject: Corrupt Practices, dated 25 September 1972.

Copies of all of these letters were forwarded to CORDS, TRAC and I believe all but the last two forwarded to CORDS, MACV by the DEPCORDS, TRAC.

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Education: We provide practically no advisory assistance. The Vietnamese pay great attention to this program. There are problems concerning student-teacher ratios, inadequate facilities, etc. Our counterparts are aware of these and are taking appropriate action. Every year more classrooms are added, more teachers obtained and more permanent facilities extended to the remote areas.

Public Health: We only monitor this program. This is a low-priority program with the Vietnamese. When gasoline is in short supply, the public health section (as separate from the hospital) is cut. The same applies to supplies. Hospital facilities are inadequate. Hau Nghia needs a decent hospital. I've heard promises concerning new facilities since my arrival. All I have seen is very limited funds allocated to improve existing facilities. In public health a goal should be established which would increase the amount of time military doctors devote to the provincial hospital. Most military doctors pursue private practices. Ours seldom devote more than two hours a day to the provincial hospital. The remaining time is spent in his private practice in Saigon.

Public Works: The province Public Works Service has the will and the expertise. However, it is under-funded, under-staffed and under-equipped. Roads are vital. Where the back roads are bad (most are) the government cadre go to those hamlets less frequently. These same poor roads inhibit the movement of produce to the markets. Unfortunately, the bad roads are where good roads are needed most and would have the greatest positive effect on peoples attitudes, prosperity and loyalty. The long awaited "Provincial Packages" are a fading dream.

Economic Development: It appeared that at long last the Hiep Hoa Sugar Mill would open in June 1972. However the offensive has once again deferred those plans. Hau Nghia's reputation as an insecure area is not conducive to attracting capital and therefore, development continues to be marginal and insignificant.

Land Reform: The program is moving along well, in terms of achieving assigned goals. Emphasis should be given to bringing uncultivated, arable land into production. In Hau Nghia most of this land does not come under LTTT because it is classified as sugar and pineapple land. The villagers who own this land are not anxious to cultivate it because it is in relatively insecure areas and they have enough land under cultivation to provide a living. What is needed is strong pressure from Central to either reclassify such lands as rice lands or as national land. The owners should be allotted a specific time to bring it under cultivation. If not, reclassified lands would be opened under LTTT on a first come, first served basis. If reclassified as national land, it could be distributed to refugees on some scheme as the soldier/farmer plan of Dr. Dan. Under such pressure, the current owners would probably go to work. If not, other deserving groups would benefit. In either event, the increased production would provide economic benefits to the province and in addition,

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the land clearing and cultivation would improve security by depriving the enemy of mini-bases and unobserved routes for movement.

Domestic Production: VSD and Rural Credit have contributed to increased agricultural productivity. Hau Nghia continues to produce about a 5% surplus of rice. Secondary crops, particularly peanuts, are expanding rapidly. Future improvements in security in Trang Bang and Cu Chi will encourage this expansion. Hau Nghia must have more people to bring about really significant increases in production. It is unlikely that there will be any great increase in population until security improves in northern Trang Bang and west of the Vam Co Dong. This is where most of the uncultivated, arable land is located.

Labor: The problem is twofold. Firstly, there are not sufficient people to cultivate abandoned land; secondly, there is insufficient economic development to attract labor from adjoining provinces. Both problems stem from Hau Nghia's bad reputation, underdevelopment and marginal security in northern Trang Bang and west of the Vam Co Dong.

Youth Affairs: Youth activities have gotten a real shot in the arm from Colonel Hau and from the completion of a soccer field and tennis court in Bao Trai. Emphasis should be on activities for the five to fifteen year old. The enemy devotes considerable attention to this age group and so should we. Older children are in the PSDF or the uniformed services. Their youth-type activities should be included in those programs.

Public Administration: The major problem in this area is the bureaucracy itself and its organizational procedures. Nothing happens unless it is initiated by the Province Chief or higher authority. The system is clogged with paperwork and endless levels of administration. Decentralization and delegation of authority is badly needed from Saigon to the hamlet. It is probably too late to make any meaningful change. However, if we ever get into a similar advisory situation in the future, this endeavor should be a major program and there should be a public administration advisor on the province team.

CONFIDENTIAL

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VIS: VIS has shown little or no improvement during the past 18 months. This is primarily a logistic problem. They have a vast job and "half-vast" resources. There is no need for an "advisor"; all he does is dispense APF and the service gets more than enough attention from the Province Chief. The CDLD Plan calls for the phase-out of VIS village cadre during the span of the plan. This was altered in September when the Ministry of Information ordered the termination of hamlet level cadre by 1 October 1972. The village level cadre will be phased out over a longer period. As these cadre phase out, RD Cadre will assume their former functions. I recommend that the village VIS cadre be phased out immediately. Qualified and motivated cadremen from the village could then be transferred to the district VIS offices where they could be utilized on the mobile information teams. Village level cadre are generally not very effective. There is little to be gained through a gradual draw-down.

POLWAR: As far as its PSYOPS mission is concerned, this program suffers from many of the same logistic problems which plague VIS. In addition, a POLWAR officer, to be effective, must have missionary zeal, be highly intelligent and educated, have had extensive troop duty, and hate the communists. I have not seen many of those kind of people, so it does not surprise me that the program is a "go through the motions" type of thing. Many of the POLWAR officer's responsibilities are, in my opinion, the commander's leadership responsibility. It is inconceivable to me that morale, welfare and fighting spirit are relegated to a staff officer, yet most commanders I have met look upon it that way and have their POLWAR officer do many things they themselves should do.

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Security Classification

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DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D		
(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)		
1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
HQ DA, DAFO, Washington, D. C. 20310		Confidential
		2b. GROUP
3. REPORT TITLE Senior Officer Debriefing Report (LTC Gerald T. Bartlett) - Province Senior Advisor, Hau Nghia Province - Inclusive Dates 19 May 1971 - 14 Nov 1972		
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Senior Officer Debriefing Report, 19 May 1971 - 14 Nov 1972		
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) Lieutenant Colonel Gerald T. Bartlett		
6. REPORT DATE 29 November 1972	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 21	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 72B031	
8c. PROJECT NO. N/A	8d. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY DA, DAFO, Washington, D. C. 20310
13. ABSTRACT		

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DD FORM 1473
1 NOV 66

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(This page is unclassified)